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AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

VOLUME 6 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, NOVEMBER, 1924 NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday evening, 13th inst., at eight o'clock, in the Assembly Hall of the Public Library, corner of McAllister and Larkin Sts. Take elevator to third floor. Car lines No. 5 or No. 19.

Past Honorary President Joseph Dixon has spent the greater portion of the past season in the field, in various districts of the state, making observations and gathering data on a number of vitally important questions. At this meeting he will deliver an address on the subject of "The Fate of the Sage Hen in California" which will be of interest to all concerned in the conservation of our wild life. Visitors will be made welcome.

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NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP will be taken on Sunday, November 16, to Lake Lagunitas. Purchase round trip tickets to Ross and take Sausalito ferry leaving San Francisco at 8:45 a. m. In event of rain preventing this trip, it will be taken the following Sunday. This is a walk of about eight miles, up the canyon, around the lake and back to Ross. Lunch will be eaten at the picnic place below Lake Lagunitas dam. Bring cups.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE OCTOBER MEETING: The ninety-third regular meeting of the Association was held on October 9th, in the Assembly Hall of San Francisco Public Library, with President Kibbe in the chair; Mrs. Carl R. Smith, Secretary; sixteen members and seven guests in attendance.

Miss Pettit made reference to the Nature work of the Camp Fire Girls and to the opportunity afforded by the work of the association to leaders desiring to equip themselves for bird study, and on the motion of Mr. Schindler it was resolved to extend an invitation to all Camp Fire Guardians to become members of the association and thus share in its advantages.

Following the business session, Mrs. G. Earle Kelly, Vice-President of the Association, gave a detailed account of "Birding Experiences in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties" during the summer just past, together with the results of observations made during an extension of the trip to Crater and Upper Klamath Lakes.

Leaving Alameda by automobile on May 26th, the first stop was made at Willits and in the upper stretches of this run, the notable birds were song sparrow, russet-backed thrush, both towhees, chat and yellow-headed blackbird. Continuing to Weymouth Inn, a day's canvass of the vicinity disclosed pine siskins everywhere; great blue and black-crowned night herons, kingfisher, two ospreys and many ravens; lazuli buntings, willow goldfinches, swifts and winter wrens. Thence to Eureka, meeting buzzards galore.

Climbing to Kneeland Prairie, a plateau at an elevation of about two thousand feet, the character of the bird population underwent a radical change in conformity with the altered habitat. Here were found lark and savannah sparrows, western and Traill flycatchers and the varied thrush with a peculiarly wild call. A visit to Wilder Canyon disclosed the russet-backed thrush, winter wren and ruby-crowned kinglet as predominating.

The next stop was made at Crescent City, with goldfinches plentiful en route. One day was devoted to a study of water birds at the Castle Rocks, reached by motor launch. A happy combination of favorable weather and tides enabled a ready landing on the rocky island, where the party was able to observe to heart's content, surf and white-winged scoter, western gulls, Brandt and Baird cormorants, brown pelicans, tufted puffins, pigeon guillemots, oyster catchers, murres and Kaeding petrels. A day's trip to Earle Lake developed chickadees, fox sparrows and western bluebirds, with tule wrens and a booming bittern at the lake.

Leaving Crescent City and heading for Grant's Pass, *via* Oregon Caves, birds encountered for a stretch of thirty five miles were few, notably grouse, juncos, chipping sparrows and lazuli buntings. Through Grant's Pass were met band-tailed pigeons, doves and quail. Approaching the Crater Lake district, very good birding was found around Prospect. Here were innumerable thrushes, both russet-backed and hermit; robins, swallows, bluebirds, many chipping sparrows, and a water ouzel was observed.

At Crater Lake were encountered birds of the higher altitudes; Clarke crows, Cassin finches, the leucostiste, western tanagers, mountain bluebirds, bald eagle and three Oregon jays.

Heading southward, the next stop was made at Eagle Ridge Lodge, on the west side of Upper Klamath Lake, a most delightful resort for bird lovers. Land and water birds abounded and at the lodge was found a list of birds noted in the vicinity by our vacationing second vice-president, Miss Amy Gunn. Mrs. Kelly mentioned especially the pileolated warblers, green-tailed towhees and cock-of-the-woods and creepers among the land birds, with the water species represented notably by Forster, black and Caspian terns, Farallon cormorants, white pelicans and western gulls.

From here the homeward journey was continued by auto to Ashland, Oregon, whence return was made by train. In the thirteen days elapsing to June 8th, one hundred eighteen species were encountered, and this, perhaps, testifies better than anything else to the character of the territory traversed and the vigilance of the observers.

Mrs. Kelly's illuminating account of the trip was followed with great interest and was keenly appreciated by every member of her audience, and the meeting adjourned with many expressions of pleasure felt by all present.

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MALHEUR LAKE

Supplementing Mrs. Kelly's notes on birds of southwestern Oregon, it will be interesting to learn something of the conditions at Malheur Lake, about 110 miles east of Crater Lake, as described in a letter to Dr. H. C. Bryant, dated August 18, 1924. This is the breeding ground saved from destruction by drainage through the intervention of the U. S. Biological Survey.

It was at Malheur Lake, on June 29th, that I first saw the yellow-headed blackbird. The place where we first saw so many different kinds of bird was a creek, or slough, which entered the lake at some distance below. We stopped at a bridge to watch the Forster terns diving into the water for fish and paying no attention to us. Fork-tailed swallows were swooping under the bridge to enter their nests. A little beyond, picking food out of the mud, were five or six glossy ibises.

We thought our cup of joy was full, but we were destined for a day of many surprises. We must have remained for a half-hour or more, enjoying the various doings of the wild life about us, when, looking in another direction, we recognized a bittern with head thrown up in characteristic fashion. He soon forgot his pose, threw his head forward and squirmed his neck in snake-like fashion and made off through the grass and reeds. A water snake lay curled up, sunning himself on the edge of the bridge.

Mr. Benson has charge of the reservation and he kindly piloted us to the different colonies. Last year a launch was necessary to go about visiting the birds at work and play, but this year being a very dry one in eastern Oregon, we could make our way to the different breeding places by motor car. We climbed a haystack to see a number of pelicans and snowy egrets in the distance. In another direction we could see many geese and ducks with their young. Again at some distance, we witnessed the most ludicrous performance of the whole day. Many stilts and avocets, on seeing us, went through the most strenuous exercises,—dancing and screaming on the part of the stilts,—and lowering of the wings and heads of the avocets, with much running here and there on the part of both, in the effort to keep us from disturbing their eggs and young. I, for my part, could not find either, but of course the excited birds did not know that, and so they kept up their undignified performance as long as we were there.

Among the tules, the wrens were busy, looking after their young. Other small, sparrow-like, birds flew about the marshes but they did not utter any notes, so we could not identify them. We also saw some phalaropes.

At the gull colony we saw the young in all stages of development. As it was an exceedingly warm day, the very young nestled at the roots of the tules, in the shade. The old birds flew overhead, making a great outcry at our intrusion. On coming away from these enchanting experiences, we stopped again at the bridge, hoping to see the scenes of the morning reenacted, but, alas, there were few birds about, principally blackbirds and swallows.

On nearing our destination, Burns, a town on the Silvies river, some miles above the lake, we watched as directed by Mr. Benson, for a colony of egrets. We finally located them in a row of willows. There must have been about one hundred fifty of the old birds and about the same number of young in their nests. The old birds circled above us, uttering cries, and finally they settled in an alfalfa field, their whiteness making a striking contrast against the green of the fields. Their cries aroused the curiosity of the gulls in the neighborhood and they, too, circled in the air high above us.

Now do you not think I fared well on that eventful day? If you have not visited eastern Oregon or Washington, you have great pleasure in store for you. Visitors to Malheur Lake during the previous year did not see everything that we were able to view this dry year. According to Mr. Benson, who has been here for some years, the stilts and avocets had not bred here until the present year. The birds I could get to see, but which were seen in their floating nests in other years, were the grebes, but to reach them one must go out in launches.

MARIA V. BALLARD.

KLAMATH RIVER FISH AND GAME DISTRICT

As this issue is going to press, it is apparent that the initiative measure, No. 11 on the recent ballot, for the preservation of the last remaining unpolluted source of eggs of sea-running trout and salmon, from which the Fish and Game Commission draws its supply for propagation and stream stocking, has been adopted with a majority of well over one hundred thousand votes. The law reads as follows:—

"Section 1. The Klamath River Fish and Game District is hereby created and shall consist of the Klamath river and the waters thereof, following its meanderings from the confluence of the Klamath river and the Shasta river in the county of Siskiyou to the mouth of the Klamath river in Del Norte County.

Section 2. Every person, firm, corporation or company who constructs or maintains any dam or other artificial obstruction in any of the waters of said Klamath River Fish and Game District is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction must be fined not less than five hundred dollars ($500) or be imprisoned in the county jail of the county in which the conviction shall be had, not less than one hundred days, or by both such fine and imprisonment, and any artificial obstruction constructed, placed or maintained in said district is hereby declared to be a public nuisance."

* * *

OCTOBER FIELD TRIP was taken on Sunday, the 12th, to Lake Merced. It was a fine day and those who took the trip were well repaid for the effort. Lake Merced is always friendly to birds and bird lovers. There seemed to be more ducks and gulls on the lake than usual at this season of the year. Most of the ducks were canvasbacks. Perhaps the most interesting birds seen were a flock of golden-crowned kinglets which were observed for some time.

Late in the afternoon three members of the party walked along the ocean beach and were rewarded with wonderful views of about sixty sanderlings and numerous snowy plover.

Birds seen at the lakes were Western, eared and pied-billed grebes; Western and California gulls; Farallon cormorant; canvas-back, scaup and ruddy ducks; great blue heron and coot; Northern phalarope and killdeer; California quail; marsh, sharp-shinned western red-tailed and sparrow hawks; kingfisher, red-shafted flicker, Anna hummer, black phoebe; bi-colored blackbird, meadowlark and Brewer blackbird; Nuttall sparrow, junco, song and fox sparrow; San Francisco towhee; Townsend and Audubon warblers; Vigors and tule wrens, chickadee, bush-tits and golden-crowned kinglets.

On the beach were seen Heermann gulls, sanderlings and snowy plover. Making a total of forty species in all.

Members present were Misses Cohen, Schroder and Sterne; Mrs. Mexia, Mrs. Thomas; Messrs. Elmore, Grueningen, Myers, Thomas, Ananda and Eric Jacobs. As guests Misses Newton and Stevens, and Mrs. Elmore; Felix Jacobs and five boys from Troup 20 of San Francisco, Jack Lazarus, Edgar Lazarus, David Levy, Henry Levy and Edmond Wagner.

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

FOR THE STUDY AND THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

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Meets second Thursday of each month, at 8:00 p.m., in Assembly Hall of San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Streets.

Address Bulletin correspondence to President.

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